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The Commonweal

March 18, 1949

Some Italian Communist Types

Jean C. de Menasce

The Atlantic Pact

J. L. Benvenisti

American Forests Ending Oriental Exclusion

VOLUME XLIX 15c NUMBER 23

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The
COMMONWEAL

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THE COMMONWEAL *is indexed in the Reader's Guide, Catholic Periodical Index and The Guide to Catholic Literature Founded by the Calvert Associates, Inc., in 1924 with Michael Williams as President and Editor.*
Published weekly and copyrighted 1949 in the U.S.A., by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. MUrray Hill 3-9685. Entered as second-class matter February 9, 1934, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. U. S. and Canada $7 a year. Foreign $8. Single copies 15c

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Ending Oriental Exclusion

WHEN the Judd Bill (H.R. 199) passed the House, March 1, by a one-sided voice vote, certain glaring deficiencies were on the way to being rectified. If the Senate can be prevailed upon to pass the legislation in its turn, two things will have been accomplished. The stigma of racial inferiority will no longer be attached by American law to Oriental peoples, and some 85,000 Japanese (and several thousand Koreans and a few Polynesians) long resident in this country will be eligible for normal processes of naturalization. The Chinese were freed from the restrictions of the 1924 Oriental Exclusion Act in 1943, and the inhabitants of India and the Philippines in 1946, so that if the Senate concurs on the present bill, Oriental exclusion *per se* from the United States will at last be abrogated.

Since the numbers of Asiatics permitted by quota now, and under the Judd Bill, are so negligible, its principal tangible effect will be in the field of naturalization. Here, several factors are responsible for the almost universal support the legislation had in the course of its journey to the House floor. The superb record of the Nisei, or Japanese-American, contingents in the American Army won the greatest esteem even in Texas; their rescue of a Texas battalion which had been trapped behind the German lines was one of the most heroic feats—and most costly in lives—of the whole war. Out on the Pacific Coast, where soon after Pearl Harbor there was a hysterical rounding up of Japanese-Americans, seizure of their properties and a herding of these loyal citizens into internment camps, there is today a great change of feeling. The industriousness of the Nisei is now appreciated rather than envied in California, and some three-quarters of them are said to be back in the areas from which they were so hastily evicted. Sentiment is consequently strong to permit the mothers and fathers of these exemplary American citizens to be naturalized. An important element throughout has been the able "educational" work of the Japanese-American Citizens League and their Caucasian friends, determined to see justice done.

But if the Judd Bill becomes a law and the people of Asia are no longer barred from entering the United States explicitly on racial grounds, discrimination in these matters is not entirely obliterated. The largest single yearly quota, for Japan, is only 185, and whereas European quotas, notably larger, permit each person counted to include his immediate family, the Japanese 185 means 185 men, women and children in all. Here is one provision which might be rectified before the bill is presented on the Senate floor.

Another puzzle is that the bill should explicitly bar citizens of the British West Indies from continuing to enter the country under the British quota of 66,000, relegating these islands to a status which entitles them to only 100 immigrants a year. How this rider got attached to a bill about the Orient is somewhat of a mystery, but it looks as if here was another repair job for the Senate committee.

These two reservations, coupled with the realization that the new act would not materially change the mathematical restrictions on immigration from the East, tend to restrain enthusiasm for H.R. 199. Yet for what it will accomplish it should be consistently backed until enactment is secured.

Ownership and Regulation: Trees

THE GENERAL problem of balancing and making effective the public, social interest in private property has gradually taken spectacular form in the immense domain of 409 million acres which belongs to private American forest owners. Private ownership accounts for two-thirds of all our forest land, and three-fourths of the commercial: 345 million acres. While the country is more and more committed to a "high level economy," the actual condition of the nation's woodlands is degenerating at an alarming rate, accumulating certain trouble for the future.

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The President's message to Congress and the 1948 Report of the Chief of the Forest Service both stressed, in the words of President Truman, that "our conservation practices in many areas require improvement, including the regulation of timber cutting. . . . We must place our forests on a sustained-yield basis. . . ." A new and completely interesting report of the Forest Service, "Forests and National Prosperity," makes the issue very clear: the tremendous requirements here and abroad and the almost unlimited utility of wood and the unwoodlike things made out of it, the creeping crisis as the forests are ruined and their future eliminated, the vast opportunity to be realized from good use of adequate trees, and several evident ways to start working, finally, for sound forests and forest industries

"Character of ownership largely determines the treatment and management of forests," the Report demonstrates, and so also, "the stability of forestry enterprises, and the kind of action needed to put the nation's forests on a permanent productive basis." By just about any standard, the situation is worse, the smaller the woodland property; and 261 million acres, 76 percent, are in small holdings of less than 5,000 acres each, the average property being 62 acres. This involves 4 million owners.

The Forest Service proposes in conservative and persuasive manner ten principal "public aids and services to private owners," and then recommends, as it must, that: "A system of public regulation of cutting and other forest practices should be established that will stop forest destruction and keep forest land reasonably productive. The states should continue to have opportunity to enact and administer adequate regulatory laws. However, in order to assure a consistent pattern—nation-wide and in a reasonable time—a basic federal law is needed." Perhaps that is a quotation for the legal profession right up to the Supreme Court, as well as for all the legislatures. But the public interest is so clear and pressing that the legalities must be solved. A solution is demanded not only for the benefit of society as a whole, but also for the private owners, especially those 4 million small ones, who under present conditions gain least for themselves while injuring most the prospects of the country's prosperity. The protection of private property requires its regulation. No one has a right to create a desert.

It Ain't Eschatologically So

THIRTY-TWO years ago, liberals in every country were hopeful that the Russian Revolution was the streaking of a dawn of internationalism. Red sky in the morning has proved shepherd's warning indeed, and one of the strangest things about the ideology of the Kremlin has been its ever-increasing nationalism. This ingrowing quality is shown, as are many other aspects of theMarxist-Stalinist line, in the *Current Digest of the Soviet Press,* published by the Joint Committee on Slavic Studies, and surely the most important weekly (THE COMMONWEAL of course excepted) published in this country. *Current Digest* receives *Pravda* and *Izvestia* by airmail, and promises that within three weeks of publication in Moscow, their contents, carefully englished, objectively condensed, arranged by subject matter, and to be indexed quarterly, are here presented to American readers.

Mr. Churchill's *Memoirs,* if they have done nothing else, have pointed up the tremendous importance of a close and constant study of enemy tactics, inventions, plans, propaganda, strategy and politics. *Current Digest* deguts some forty other newspapers and magazines; it publishes important ones in their entirety; where articles have been condensed, or portions omitted, indication is clearly given.

Particularly interesting are the considerable sections devoted to religion. Cardinal Mindszenty's relation to the Hungarian authorities is naturally given much space. Professor Troitsky's article, in the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate, expounding the reasons why the Orthodox Church cannot meet either the unional strivings of the Roman Church, nor the ecumenical Protestant movements, assumes Orthodoxy as the faith of all Russians, who cannot accept the substitution of the Roman concept of static unity, or the Protestant fallacy of mechanical and administrative unity as alternatives for solely Orthodox apostolic unity!

To read the *Current Digest* is to see everything in (alas! not always distorting enough!) distorting mirrors. Here are diplomacy, genetics, plant-breeding, posters, theatres, existentialism, films, foreign affairs, the Berlin air-lift, the American depression (the drop in production in 1946 reached proportions unknown in the history of economic crises with the sole exception of 1929-33), the employment of war criminals by the US; the lack of opportunity currently denied 6,000,000 US children; the Paris embezzlers, the British housing lag; the Marshallizing of France; the US Retail Bookseller's epicly serene statement that, to achieve sales, a book must contain horror, madness and sexuality; the true, proletarian internationalism, whose most vivid and effective criterion is readiness to defend the Soviet Union with every ounce of strength. So to see ourselves as shown to others; so to see facts slanted in exactly the opposite direction, gives a prestidiginous vertigo. Not the thirty spokes make the wheel, but the enclosed air; and the Soviet system is closed as the pre-Copernican universe; yet it is as concrete and complete a methodology as the Summa itself. Not the means, not the way, but the ends create the story; if the Marxist premises

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are accepted every single article in *Current Digest* makes horridly good sense. Not that, but why, is still the question. And the answer can only be, it is, or it ain't, eschatologically so.

Austrian Peace Treaty

IN LONDON the Big Four deputy Foreign Ministers are trying once again to write a peace treaty for Austria. At the moment the deputies are stuck in the mud. Most of the slow-going lies in an area around the border of Austria and Yugoslavia: specifically, in the Austrian province of Carinthia and in the neighboring Yugoslavian province of Slovenia.

This is the trouble: in Carinthia lives a Slovene minority that Yugoslavia has wanted to annex ever since the First World War. In 1920 an Allied Plebiscite Commission polled the province to settle the dispute, and the residents voted, by a considerable majority, to stay in Austria. As Austrians, the Carinthian Slovenes have had freedom to enjoy their own culture: they speak their own language, they have full voting rights in all elections, and they maintain their own schools within the Slovene national movement.

Last year, during the Austrian peace treaty negotiations, Marshal Tito, his eye on the Slovenes, took the opportunity to demand a slice of Austrian Carinthia; when the Allies would hear none of it, treaty talks broke off. This year, Tito has scaled down the slice he wants of Carinthia, but for this concession he is substituting a fresh proposal: now he wants Slovenian Carinthia to be an autonomous area, with its own government and police force.

When this demand was made in London, the Russian delegate backed up the Yugoslavs, despite the present Cominform feud between Russia and Tito. The reasons for the Russian support are plain enough: if Tito gets Slovenian autonomy, it will be a serious breach in the Austrian state, another victory for the present communist expansion in Central Europe—an advantage which only Tito is now in a position to win for communism, but one which Russia will take away from him, if and when the Cominform drives him out; if Tito loses the Slovenes again, Russia will have a good propaganda line to use against him in Yugoslavia.

The Western powers reacted promptly to Tito's proposal: they refused it, knowing that an autonomous Slovene area would be politically unrealistic—a temptation inviting the Yugoslavs to infiltrate across into the small Slovene police force and then to crack down at will. Instead, the Western powers have agreed to write into the peace treaty guarantees for the freedom of all minority groups in Austria, including the Carinthian Slovenes.

Actually, the Slovenes, who have traditionally received such freedom from the Austrians, can only face the prospect of Yugoslav annexation with suspicion. For the Slovenes are mostly Catholic and they are mostly small, free landowners. To be taken over by the Yugoslavs who hold Archbishop Stepinac in prison does not promise religious freedom; and to be incorporated into the Yugoslav collectivization of small farms promises only political and economic subservience to a totalitarian state. Certainly in the circumstances no changes should be made without a free plebiscite, or without some other adequate expression of the popular will.

To write an Austrian peace treaty on Tito's terms, the Allies will have to sell the Carinthian Slovenes into the hands of persecution and suppression. No real, permanent peace treaty can be written in terms which prejudice the rights of minority groups and do so without giving the minority a chance to say yes or no.

Silver Jubilee Fund

THE PURPOSE of this fund, begun two weeks ago, is to obtain the financial aid which we must have to continue publication. The necessary goal is $50,000. We are asking our readers to help us reach this goal by contributing one or more $25 units. Already the response to our appeal has been most encouraging. If more of our readers will respond now, we are confident that this Fund will attain its goal—and will assure the future of THE COMMONWEAL.

Abstractness of the Federal Program

THE ADMINISTRATION program is not going speedily with the 81st Congress. Administration circles have talked of getting a renewed mandate by some Presidential field trip, but that appears unlikely because of time, and because analysis throws doubt on the power of Mr. Truman over the electorate, compared with that of many politicians who are slowing up the program. Administration impetus has been wasted in theoretic efforts. Especially, "inflation control" seems academic and a bit ironic next to prevailing business indexes. It may not be logical to fight against such a control stubbornly if the control will not be brought into effect by further inflation, but it also may be self-defeating for the Administration stubbornly to insist. There are more positive elements to act upon: housing, land use, farming, security, labor measures. The federal government is being too abstract.

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Some Italian Communist Types

From the upper classes, the white collar group and the downtrodden.

Jean C. de Menasce

IT IS SAID that political life demoralizes man. It seems to me that politics does not demoralize but rather shows what is hidden in the heart. It spreads on the surface of national life what before was corrupting the inner soul. It is as if the sewers had been smashed open. It certainly doesn't make a pretty sight, the coming to light of this muck. It will oblige us to drain the swamps that we pretend to ignore. Another advantage of enlarging those defects by a political lens is to show them in all their shabby stupidity.

One of the defects that can poison political life is trickiness. It is not Machiavellianism on a grand scale; it is the old short-sighted cleverness that we use in our family and business life. It is not the Machiavellianism of a prince; it is rather that of the corner drugstore. Our political double-crosser has no other goal than to avoid being taken for a sucker. He wants to double-cross others for fear of being double-crossed. The smart aleck who has managed to out-smart his grocer and his neighbor round the corner thinks that he can apply the same technique when playing his part in the gigantic struggle between Russia and America. He continues to think himself smart, enclosing himself in the artificial labyrinth of his own devious mind, not realizing how childish he really is.

Such a man does not realize how much sound philosophy is expressed by the proverb, "You can't have your cake and eat it," for in his private life he is accustomed to contradicting this statement successfully, and since his childhood days has given up obeying the brutal simplicity of the Gospel: "You cannot serve two masters." He thinks that he can win by playing double and triple stratagems. He is glad to receive packages from America, but he doesn't intend to be taken for a sucker. He knows that "everyone does things only for himself." He has learned from his parents to be a cynic, to "read between the lines," to suspect other people's intentions, to be really clever and know therefore that everybody acts on a bad motive.

He won't let himself be tricked into gratitude. He must, to keep his self-respect, despise the giver. He therefore has big theories on the materialism of Americans, their mechanical civilization, their inability to understand "our old European ethos." "They can't fool me. I will eat their CARE packages, but to show my spiritual superiority I will belong to the Leftist Party."

This type loves the feeling of being animated by great revolutionary sentiments and advocating the most radical solutions. He becomes a fellow-traveler, votes communist, but even here he thinks that he can outsmart the communists. He certainly is not going to become a member of the Party. He will join it as an "independent." Without fear he talks himself into a revolution because he also knows everything about military strategy. "We are living in Italy, which is under American influence. America cannot let us fall under Russian power. We are protected by the atomic bomb." Reassured as he is by American military strength he can indulge in the luxury of revolutionary friends and conversations. He works for the communists, sure that they won't win. Thus this fellow-traveler thinks that he has outsmarted both the Russians and Americans. He has eaten dehydrated soup without gratitude and worked for revolution without running the risk of seeing it come to pass.

When the Russians and Americans don't play the game, he is scandalized by their lack of refinement. When the Russians succeed in their push in Czecholsovakia, or the Americans let them know that Marshall Plan aid will stop if Italy goes Red, our infantile fellow-traveler gets angry with Marshall and Molotov. He ought really to get angry with his mother, who has never taught him what moral maturity is and that you must be ready to pay the price for your choice. His mother has never taught him that if you want your cake you must keep it, or if you want to eat it you must give up having it, that life is made up of preferences, choice and renunciation. This type of communist that recruits itself in the upper middle class is but an adolescent.

II

MANY of us live in the structures of social and cultural life like the unskilled worker on an assembly line who, knowing nothing of the process of production, gives to it only his fatigue and his sweat. Our civilization, in fact, produces a cultural as well as an industrial proletariat.

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Our scientific and juridical culture, as well as our economic and political culture, are so complex and refined that many of us are only proletarians or tourists, that is, victims or beneficiaries.

We live in our civilization like the man who throws a glance at a flower without even suspecting all the labor of the horticulturist or the ingenuity of the hybridizer, all the processes and efforts that have been necessary to defend this flower against the cold, the rain and parasites. Before that flower I am a proletarian or a tourist. A tourist if I just pick it up or buy it; or a proletarian if I work like a slave to produce it, not knowing why or what I am doing. The danger of our civilization is that so many of us are proletarians and tourists. We are alienated from her. We don't take part in her growth. We live on her fringes to exploit her or be exploited by her. These proletarian-tourists become irresponsible, believe in miracles; they become "capricious" and therefore become brutal and superficial revolutionaries, or brutal and superficial reactionaries.

The contact that the peasant has with the slow processes of nature defends him against that mentality of the white collar demiurge. The peasant who from his youth has known how to adapt his effort to the slow rhythms of nature and learned patience from the slow growth of his products, knows that you cannot hasten the sun or improvise crops, that it is necessary to till the soil and cooperate with it; he becomes a more human conservative than the little white collar employee. His whole life makes him immune against impatience for a miraculistic revolution. But the little white collar man that wants the results without even suspecting all that is implied in their production will have quite another position. Peasant revolutions can be violent, hard, bloody; but the peasant doesn't succumb to such disgruntled white collar illusions. Even the industrial worker, whose work has to measure itself against hard materials, has learned to be more cautious, since you can't talk a product into existence.

The Italian peasant and the Italian workingman are by nature and by the long hard school not miraculistic revolutionaries; and if their leaders were not little white collar fanatics they could build up, as in England and America, a steady and gradualistic labor movement. But on account of the lack of culture, the labor movement in Italy is in the hands of a small middle class. Those people know nothing about how much patience, thought and work go into producing anything. They do not know how many centuries of accumulated effort, of heroism, of anxiety, of uncertainties, humanity has gone through to attain the smallest achievements.

Accustomed as he is to manipulate civilization without knowing what it is, like a man who turns on the radio or switches off the light, our little white collar revolutionary of big cities, who since childhood has lived in a world where man has triumphed over nature, dominated her, has a sense of man's power. The city with its lights, its transportation, its products in the shop windows makes him think that there is a short-cut to everything. Since man is no longer conditioned by the night, the weather, distances, he thinks himself a god—all the more because he has neither culture nor a historical sense. Full of the sense of power because he presses buttons, and full of resentment because he enjoys so little of what our civilization gives, he becomes a revolutionary. He thinks himself a communist, but he fails to come to grips with social and economic structures; he leaves it all to slogans. He jumps over all the intermediate steps, dreaming of a nice little world without production and only distribution. Neither the economist nor the politician, but the educator can prevent the birth of that type of revolutionary. For that type disappears when aware of the workshops of our civilization. To fight that kind of revolutionary it is not enough to give more food or lodging to the poor. It is necessary to find a way to prevent our civilization from breaking up into two groups: a very small élite that knows the why and how of things and an immense mass that only lives amongst them.

III

REBECCA WEST notes that certain heretics of the Middle Ages suffered from disastrous economic conditions, but as the mental trend of the time, the current ideas and preoccupations, the intellectual mood, was a theological one, these men, instead of solving their problems on the economic and social level, sought to solve them in terms of new theologies. They would attack some dogma of the Church instead of coming to grips with problems of production. Today we are seeing just the opposite, yet a manifestation of the same mental confusion. Many people suffer from mental agonies but as the trends of the time, the ideas that are in the air, are for economics and politics, the men of today think that their inner problems will be solved by the nationalization of industry.

Many people are not communists because they believe in economic plans and in the validity of a new industrial organization, they are communists because they are unhappy.

Their political ideas are not ideas but ideologies. That means that they organize their ideas around an unconscious emotion and that is why they become such fanatics, so brittle and so hard in their discussions, and that is why no argument, no problem, no practical difficulty will make them give up their position, for the strength of their

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political affirmations derives from the intensity of their emotional life and not from the intellectual validity of their political thinking.

These revolutionaries are more in need of a psychoanalytic couch than a briefing by Lord Keynes. They put themselves in the hands of Mr. Togliatti instead of the hands of Mr. Freud. These small employees, these sharecroppers, these men that have had an unhappy childhood could be changed not by political revolution but by an awareness that the obscure powers at work are not those of industry but those of their own resentment.

★

Let us analyze some of these psychological positions. Some of them know only how to "act against." They are in a state of permanent opposition and revolt. They revolt against God not through any intellectual crisis but on account of their antagonistic position toward any authority from the day they were bullied by their parents. Their scientific and philosophical arguments are grouped in a haphazard way and merely to give rational solidity to their emotional hostility. They are against any form or life solidly and vastly organized; they resent authority with the same harsh anxiety and hesitation with which the adolescent opposes his parents. In reality, instead of being politicians, they are but adolescents that have not known how to liquidate their growing pains.

It is in their family experience, where authority has been oppressive and severe, that you must go and look for the beginning of that interior position that has brought them, when they became adults, to join the Party. You can talk yourself black in the face trying to explain to them the difference between anarchy, Trotskyism and Stalinism. They don't care a penny what actual communism is; the only thing they like is the fact that communism is a revolutionary movement against which the actual organized society is fighting.

These men, who from their childhood have not known how to give a mature and manly cooperation to authority but have crystallized themselves in a position of rebellion and opposition, a unique position that has given them the happy feeling of independence, are not in reality free men but disgruntled slaves. Their liberty is the liberty of a slave. It is loved and appreciated only as a power of negation and contradiction. Their actions are never actions but reactions.

Along with that spirit of opposition there exists a spirit of jealousy and revindication. Any superiority humiliates such a man. Although he thinks himself a communist, he is animated by what Lenin has called small employee egalitarianism. He doesn't desire justice, but a universal leveling down. He is not so much desirous of bettering his position as creating a mathematical equality with others. When he speaks of justice his heart in reality is yielding to avariciousness and jealousy. If he can't have the exact equivalent of what another man has he would prefer that nobody have anything. "As my child is dead," thought the mother that went to be judged by Solomon, "it is better that even the other mother cannot rejoice in a living child. Let us cut the baby in two and each one of us have half a corpse."

The poor Italian proletarian is more easily than is generally thought a victim of a sort of Byronian communism. The Italian is proud and very sensitive, even touchy, but he is also good. These qualities and these defects prepare the ground for the birth of a man of resentment. When an offense is immediately followed by a quick give and take, that man frees himself of humiliation before it has time to filter into the depths of his soul and poison his whole psychology. But when vengeance has been retarded by virtue, by a sense of humanity and also a realization of one's own lack of power, the humiliation, bottled in, becomes resentment that corrupts the whole heart. The whole heart of man fills up with a confused desire for vengeance. The spirit of malignity, jealousy, is not directed toward one person in particular but toward society as a whole.

This tragic and offended heart of the Italian shows itself in the kind of humor that is in reality a devastating sort of irony and a delight in debunking and criticizing. The deep resentment of a heart is like a valley in which all the waters from the hills are collected. Of all the experiences of life everything is forgotten except what tends to emphasize and confirm the disgruntled judgment that this man of resentment makes on the world and society.

The economic condition of a poor Italian, the lack of a spirit of organization, the pessimistic trend of a people that has gone through so much —all this augments a sense of impotence and fatality. When he has reached that point our man becomes a revolutionary. Any improvement, any progress, any positive reform, instead of diminishing his resentment, augments it. It makes him angry because it is taking out from under his feet the earth on which he stands, the growing joy of detesting everybody and everything. Nothing irritates our Byronian revolutionary so much as to see another realize a part of *his* program, because, as we said above, he is not hungry and thirsty for justice but full of deep bitterness.

These revolutionaries, curiously enough, do not desire to destroy evil but use it as a pretext for their own invective and despair. The revolutionaries I have known in the slums of Rome, in the grotto dwellings of Naples, are still more

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Byronian than is generally thought. What irritates a poor, ugly and deformed woman is not so much the comfortable car, but the beauty of another woman, a beauty that she absolutely can not herself have. Values that absolutely cannot be shared spur and intensify envy. What puts the sting of resentment in the political life of Italy, which differs on that score with America, is not only the economic differences between rich and poor but the cultural and social abyss that separates the classes. The fight between unions and management in America is hard, violent and sometimes brutal; but it is much more like a fight between two businessmen than the class struggle in Europe. There is little resentment (except among the Negroes in America) because the culture, the ways of living, the tastes and language are very similar. There exists in America immense financial differences but not that subtle distinction that exists between the "signore" and the poor. The Byronian revolutionary of Italy, when he attacks "capitalists" is fighting in reality the "gentleman," even when that "gentleman" is even more underpaid than the revolutionary.

A man that has never frightened a mouse and is pushed around by everybody at last finds his self-respect, his pride, when he becomes a communist. Finally, he who was always snubbed now makes other people tremble. He who sleeps with eight or ten children in a horrible hovel and has to stand with his hat in hand at the door of the rich man, has succeeded in worrying people in great and powerful America (the country of his dreams). He has become important and the focus of attention. He is just like a child, humiliated and neglected in his home, who becomes a gang leader not so much from a spirit of delinquency but in order to attract to himself the attention and admiration of others. He is so unhappy that he wants a big unhappiness to black out the world. And when the conservative newspapers point out what will be the cost and the disaster of a communistic régime, they make him happy. He doesn't want the future city of happiness; he is like Samson, wishing to die with all the others under the ruins of the temple.

None of these three types is really communist. Yet all these people are the rank and file of a great mass led by a self-appointed few whom I will try to describe in my next article.

The Atlantic Pact and All That

A critic of the Atlantic Pact gives his reasons

J. L. Benvenisti

THE RECENT argument between the Western nations on the subject of the proposed Atlantic Pact will surely be reckoned among the most unrealistic debates in history. Rarely have the statesmen raged so furiously together to find a formula and rarely has the formula been a matter of so little account.

There was, of course, a certain conflict to be resolved. American vital interests necessitate that in the event of a member of the Atlantic Community being attacked, she should do something pretty drastic about it; while the implications of the Constitution prevent her from defining too precisely what it is that she will do. But since it will be irresistible logic of facts and obvious vital interests that will determine events, and since everybody with two penny worth of intelligence knows what those facts and vital interests are, it is difficult to understand what all the fuss was about.

In regard to the countries of the Western European mainland, there is obviously, thanks to the presence of American troops, no need for any binding commitments at all. As things are at present, it is presumably impossible for Russia to over-run France or the Netherlands without immediately involving herself in a war with the United States. And, indeed, if Senators Vandenburg and Connally were to be rigorously logical, they should, for that very reason, press for the withdrawal from Europe of all U.S. forces—though that is unlikely. The case of other countries, such as Norway, that have contemplated joining the pact is slightly different. Here there is no particular harm in America's making her interests perfectly plain. But there is one thing that in this, as in every other case, is supremely important. It is that the limitations of an explicit or implicit American guarantee should be clearly understood; it should, that is to say, be thoroughly understood by everybody concerned that an American guarantee is a deterrent against invasion, but is no protection whatever, if despite such a guarantee, invasion should occur.

Unfortunately this distinction in peoples' minds seems not always to be as explicit as it ought to

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be, and some of the language used in this connection seems almost to be of studied ambiguity. Even the President's inaugural address, if I may say so, left something to be desired in this respect.

"If we can make it sufficiently clear in advance," the President said, "that any armed attack affecting our national security would be met with overwhelming force, the armed attack might never occur."

But what exactly is meant by the words, "would be met with overwhelming force?" Does it mean that if Norway became a signatory to the Pact and were attacked by Russia, the United States would rush over to Norway with all its forces and throw the intruders out?

I do not think that that is what the President meant, and I certainly do not think that that is what would happen, though a good many unreflecting people, in America at any rate, might take the words in that sense and so imagine that they had settled the major issue when they had in point of fact settled very little that had not been settled already by the political facts of life.

If Norway were attacked, the United States would at best immediately declare war on the aggressor, but whether she would open hostilities by liberating Norway or by engaging the enemy at some other point remains to be seen. Personally, I think she would engage the enemy at some other point. Norwegian liberation would be one of the prizes of victory but Norway might have to wait for her liberation for a very long time.

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THE SAME principle applies to Western Europe. The implicit guarantee provided by the presence of American forces may save Europe from invasion, but it will not prevent the invasion from being successful if Russia chooses to invade. The thing, therefore, that we should be chiefly concerned with is not the precise conditions which will bring America into a war, for most of us know these already, but the means whereby that war, if it comes, may be waged without turning Europe permanently and irretrievably into an ash heap. Unfortunately this task cannot be undertaken without opening up much more searching and uncomfortable inquiries, and that presumably is why till now it has been so conspicuously evaded.

Plans for the actual defense of Western Europe are admittedly already under way. The Brussels Pact Powers are busy creating Uniforce —a composite military instrument under a unified command. But sooner or later Uniforce will want arms and supplies and that is precisely the joker in the pack. For just as everybody knows that the American forces, however valuable may be the services they are at present performing, will be quite useless if it comes to a show-down, so everybody who reads the papers knows that Uniforce can at present muster nine divisions which may, we piously hope, someday be expanded to something in the neighborhood of thirty or possibly forty. And thirty or even forty divisions in the event of a Rusian attack will be about as useful as a sick headache.

It is true that we are somewhat hesitant about saying this—the nearest to a real admission that I have seen so far in print is that the most that can be expected of Uniforce is something called a "holding action," which seems to me about as far as the art of euphemism can go. I am very far from being a military expert, but I venture to assert that to talk about thirty divisions denying a territory of a few hundred vital miles to a force three or four times their number, over a period of months or possibly years, is in these days of mobile armor and air-borne attacks, to talk military nonsense.

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SO FAR so good, or if you prefer, so far so bad. The real crux of the matter will come when the American taxpayer is asked to pay billions of dollars to arm a force which will in all probability be annihilated within a week of the first shot being fired.

Within certain limits there is actually a case for doing this, even if it is only a negative one; for the breakdown of confidence, if the element of make-believe in this force became too glaring, would be disastrous; it would certainly wreck the European recovery program. Even so, however, the American taxpayer may consider the bill, which everyone knows will be large enough, to be disproportionate to the merchandise delivered, and I am very much afraid that his natural hesitancy will be impossible to conceal. What effect this will have on morale is fairly easy to imagine, as it is also easy to imagine how the Russians will exploit this obvious political opportunity.

This is the essential weakness in the whole Western position, and I am inclined to be doubtful whether it could be corrected or even ameliorated by putting cast-iron commitments into an Atlantic Pact. What point is there in America's undertaking to come to the aid of Europe when we know she will do it anyway, and when her doing it will not save Europe from the thing that Europe dreads most?

This inherent contradiction is already sensed in Europe, and must somehow be resolved in Washington, unless Western civilization is to perish; and there is, I think, only one way in which this can be done, for the real fault lies, if it lies anywhere at all, not in any hesitancy to accept a firm Atlantic Pact, but in the major

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political strategy which the Western Powers pursue—a strategy which leaves the political as well as the military initiative in the hands of the enemy, which accepts the crushing diplomatic defeat that it has already sustained, and waits, Micawber-like, for the turning up of a wholly inexplicable Russian change of heart.

It is quite arguable that this is the only possible policy which at the moment it is possible for the United States to pursue. I am not denying that. It may well be that the brute logic of facts, military, economic and political—especially political—will not permit of any other. Nevertheless, there is something to be said for exploring at least the possibilities of an alternative policy in which the political initiative would be seized out of Russian hands by the West.

If such a policy is within the realm of practical politics, there is no question to my mind about its moral justification. We have here and now half a dozen just grounds of quarrel. There are violated treaties, and there is above all the refusal to cooperate in the international control of atomic energy—a refusal, which once Russia gets the atomic bomb, will mean that the world is in a state of perpetual fear and tension that negates the very essence of peace.

To seek actively and positively to put this state of affairs to rights and to use the threat of armed force, if necessary, is by no means to wage or even to threaten what is called a preventive war. That term, as I understand it, means to wage war against another power because you think that, if you don't do this, that power will ultimately wage war against you. That is to say, the ground of your quarrel is a possibility that lies in the future. It is my contention that our grounds of quarrel lie in the present here and now, and that the opportunities of setting matters to rights will diminish as time goes on.

We used, at one time, to speak a lot about the Maginot mentality. But we used, I fear, always to treat it as though it was a failure in military thinking. I believe that was incorrect. The Maginot Line and all that it implies was only an extension into war of the political strategy pursued in peace—the strategy which permitted Hitler to tear up treaty after treaty, violate standard after standard, while we imagined that we could somehow isolate ourselves from all this and so stand by in placid and immunized detachment. In those days too we practiced the containment policy and Hitler was not contained. The fact is that you cannot contain injustice and evil. If you wish to overcome them you must grapple with them.

Please don't misunderstand me. I am not suggesting that America should rush in overnight and start threatening Russia with war. I am merely saying that all our thinking on this matter is done on the assumption that the purely passive and defensive policy of the West is the only policy that can be pursued. I think the correctness of that assumption should be examined, and the sooner we do this the better.

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AS I WAS WRITING this article, there appeared an article in the *United States News* which predicted an eighty-division army for Europe, though it was not quite clear whether this eighty-division force included the Greek and Turkish contingents. The cost of arming this force with all the etceteras was estimated at forty-six billion dollars, of which twenty-six billions was to be found by Europe, and the remainder by the American taxpayer! By what means, in peacetime and in a period of acute labor shortage, Europe was to raise a force of eighty divisions, how reliable the not inconsiderable French contingent would be, and from where Europe was to get the equivalent of twenty-six billion dollars without wrecking all hopes of recovery, was insufficiently explained. Whether in his present mood the American taxpayer, even if such a force could be raised, would be likely to find the other twenty billion without far more substantial guarantees than he is likely to receive, is a question which the reader had better answer for himself. The whole scheme, I fear, belongs to the realm of fantasy.

The Labor Movement

The Cemetery Strike II

ON MARCH 2, Ash Wednesday, the cemetery strike of the Archdiocese of New York entered its second, or critical, phase. On that day Francis Cardinal Spellman called in the press and stated that on the following day, March 3, he would lead the seminarians of Dunwoodie Seminary through the picket line of Calvary Cemetery and assist in the burial of over 1,000 bodies which had been piling up in a big open trench. This he did. Some 240 cemetery workers, who had walked out on Jan. 13, remained solidly on strike. At the smaller Gate of Heaven cemetery, where 47 workers had joined the strike on Feb. 10, supervisors assisted by lay brothers from Maryknoll were doing the work.

What were the facts behind this tragic affair? Was the strike an "anti-American, anti-Christian evil" and "a strike against the Church," as the Cardinal charged? In the Feb. 18 issue of THE COMMONWEAL most of the facts leading up to the strike were presented to you. One correction should be made. Godfrey P. Schmidt, attorney for management, points out that there were two, and not three, negotiating meetings before the strike was called.

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A third meeting was held, but it was not primarily concerned with the new contract.

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AS OBJECTIVELY as possible, here are the additional facts. The strike went on for weeks and management refused to sit down with the union and discuss the strike issues. Incidentally, Joseph O'Grady, director of the Mayor's division of Labor Relations, has said that between Jan. 13, when the strike began, and Jan. 17 he made six separate telephone calls to the office of Godfrey Schmidt, asking that Mr. Schmidt call him back when he returned to the office. He said that all six were ignored. This kind of thing happened to other interested parties trying to reach Mr. Schmidt during the strike. Mr. O'Grady continued his efforts to bring the two parties together, without success.

In the view of management the strike was "immoral and unjust" and it was apparently their intention to break off all relations with the men's union, Local 293, United Cemetery Workers, affiliated with the Food, Tobacco and Agricultural Workers, CIO. This is spite of the fact that they had had contracts with that local since 1946.

On Feb. 4 Mr. Schmidt stated that the strike was "unjust" because it had been called after only two meetings with management. The important question, however, is: what happened at those two meetings? The first was on Dec. 14, at which the union presented its demands and argued for them. The principal demand was for a 40-hour week at the same pay as the present 48-hour week. On Jan. 4 Msgr. George C. Ehardt, cemetery director, wrote a long letter to the union setting forth "the final deliberations of the Board of Trustees," namely, to rerefuse all the union's demands and counter with an offer of a cost-of-living (2.6%) increase. This would have meant $1.50 more for a 48-hour week in the case of gravediggers, who make $59.40 a week. These "final deliberations" were in no way modified at the meeting of Jan. 10, and it was made clear that they would not be modified.

On Feb. 4 Mr. Schmidt told a third party that he personally was in favor of arbitration by a board including moral theologians which would decide on "the moral justification of the strike." The third party drew up a short agreement and mailed it to Mr. Schmidt. This stated that such a board, acceptable to both parties, would be formed and that it would consider (1) the moral justification of the strike, (2) the union's demand, and (3) the management's counter-proposal.

No reply was received. However, on Feb. 10 Mr. Schmidt told the *N. Y. Times* (indirect statement) "that he was amenable to only one solution to the problem, that the moral issues of the strike be submitted to an impartial board of three distinguished theologians outside the Archdiocese of New York."

Presumably this board would consider the strike and whether it answered the five requirements of a just strike: (1) reasonable demands, (2) exhaustion of all other means, (3) reasonable chance of success, (4) the evil effects do not outweigh the good to be gained, and (5) use of just means in pursuit of the strike. They would also have to consider, presumably, first, whether these conditions were in fact answered and, second, whether the strikers believed they were answered.

But this possibility was not considered by Mr. Schmidt. Said he to the *Times*: "If this board should rule in favor of the union, we shall do all within our power to meet the union's demands. Otherwise the union must abide by the following condition for a continued relationship:

"1. To disaffiliate from their Communist-dominated international.

"2. To give us a new negotiating committee with which to deal.

"3. To accept the advice of a previous impartial arbitration board of one lay and two ecclesiastical members and continue the present contract for another year subject only to a cost-of-living increase."

(The arbitration board referred to had met to consider issues in dispute under the old contract. The two ecclesiastical members were from inside the Archdiocese of New York and the layman was an employer.)

In other words, the new arbitration board was to decide that the strike was either all black or all white. Having so decided, they would hand down the terms dictated to them by Mr. Schmidt.

The union agreed to the proposal on condition that management would also be changed in the event of a decision by the board in favor of the union. This killed the proposal.

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It was interesting that in *The Catholic News* for Feb. 12 a long letter to the editor appeared, written by Godfrey Schmidt. In this letter Mr. Schmidt replied to an ACTU column in a previous issue, written by A. C. Tuohy. Tuohy had said that the teaching of the Church was that workers have a natural right to organize in trade unions and that this implied a corresponding duty on the part of employers to recognize and deal with the unions chosen by their employees.

Mr. Schmidt, quoting Latin phrases from Saint Thomas and the papal encyclicals, pointed out that this was not an absolute law, involving "a new mortal sin," but that rights involved were "relative rights" and that "most of our controversies in the field of morals lie within the area of determinations or applications where we all lack the omniscience required for inerrancy and for perfect certitude." In another place he writes: "About determinations and application neither you nor I (nor anyone) can be infallible, as Saint Thomas reminds us many times. (Only the Pope, when he teaches *ex cathedra,* has infallibility.)" It was an impressive letter.

Mr. Schmidt would probably agree that a board of theologians, considering the cemetery strike, would be "within the area of determinations or applications" of the conditions for a just strike. And yet, on Feb. 10, Mr. Schmidt told the *N. Y. Times* that this board had only two possible alternatives: either to "rule in favor of the union" or "otherwise."

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To continue with the sequence of events. The strike dragged on. The men and their families began to suffer a good deal. They were not eligible for unemployment relief. Those with large families received $10 a week. Some of the men, in their bitterness, stopped going to Mass.

There were other kinds of suffering. Relatives of the deceased, even some who were sympathetic to labor, were profoundly upset and angered by the refusal of the workers to bury the dead. Such feelings are completely understandable.

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IT WAS on this ground that Father William Smith, S.J., director of Crown Heights Labor School, stated that the strike was unjust. *The Labor Leader,* organ of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, printed a letter from a reader in its Feb. 28 issue which answered this charge as follows: '. . . such a strike would be ordinarily unjust. However, in this case, is it not also true that such men should be hired with that understanding [that they had no right to strike] clearly made in the beginning?

"And is it not also true that, if men are to be asked not to use the right to strike (a natural right), they should be given a wage and conditions which remove the temptation, and permanent conciliation 'machinery' which would be a Christian substitute for the strike? When such conditions are lacking is a strike unjust? Or blameworthy?" In an Ed. Note *The Labor Leader* added: "Our answer is 'no'."

On Feb. 27 Cardinal Spellman entered the dispute by dispatching telegrams to each of the strikers, with the exception of the five members of the negotiating committee. Msgr. Ehardt had already, on Jan. 21 and Feb. 8, written letters to each of the strikers urging them to return to work as individuals. No one had returned to work. Now the Cardinal asked the strikers to come to a meeting on Monday, Feb. 28, at Cathedral High School. They would present their telegrams as identification.

The strikers went to the meeting, but first a spokesman stated that they would walk out unless the negotiating committee were brought in. When the men began to leave, the Cardinal acceded to this request. He then told them that he would not deal with Local 293, but that the men could have any other union they wanted. His objection to Local 293 was on the ground that it was affiliated with a Communist international union and secondly, because of its leadership, particularly the president, Joseph Manning, and the attorney, John Sheehan. He offered them a flat $4.90-a-week increase. (Up to that point the offer had been 2.6% or about $1.50 for gravediggers. The $4.90 is about 8%.) They must return to work, however, as individuals, by noon the following day, March 1, 18 hours later.

Several points should be cleared up along in here. First, the question of the Communist international. Originally, Local 293 was affiliated directly with the national CIO. The CIO then directed it to join the Food, Tobacco and Agricultural Workers, which is dominated by Communists. This was a stupid mistake by the CIO, but it cannot be blamed on the local. The international gave the local a Commie lawyer, whom the men soon got rid of in favor of John Sheehan. Sheehan is a practicing Catholic, a member of the faculty of Manhattan College (run by the Christian Brothers), a member of the executive board of ACTU-New York, and a member of the Catholic Labor Defense League, an ACTU subsidiary, has made a great personal sacrifice in giving of his time and talent, without fee, to defend impoverished unions and unionists, often against Communist union officials. This last is also true of his partner, John Harold.

Sheehan has tried on two occasions to see the Cardinal and answer the charges, mis-statements and misquotations that have been made about him. Without success. About Manning. He too is an Irish Catholic, who because he is a bachelor can apparently live on the $50-a-week he makes as the local's only full-time employee. In the experience of the writer, Manning is the only labor leader who makes less than the majority of his union members.

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On March 1 the strikers obtained from the Cardinal a 24-hour extension of his deadline. Meanwhile John Harold succeeded in seeing the Cardinal. Two meetings failed to change the situation. On March 2, Ash Wednesday, Harold and the strikers' negotiating committee went to see the Cardinal to give him the men's reply to his ultimatum. They reported that 183 strikers, all present at the meeting, had by secret ballot voted 183 to 0 to reject his terms.

At that point His Eminence stated that he would deal with Local 293 if it disaffiliated from the FTAW, but he insisted on a statement in writing that this would be done within 48 hours. The men replied that they could not speak for the Local, which has about 1,000 members, but only for the men on strike, who constitute a minority of the membership. They asked for time to hold a local meeting, stating that they would recommend disaffiliation. They also asked for time to consider the Cardinal's new wage offer, since that morning's meeting had considered primarily the question of whether they should go back to work without their union.

The Cardinal refused to give them any more time, stating that he had waited long enough. The men left and the Cardinal then called a press conference to announce his intention of leading the seminarians out to Calvary to dig graves.

The next day most of the New York press had the story wrong. The impression was created, if it was not actually said, that the dispute was over the question of disaffiliation from a Communist union. Most of the papers, even including the jubilant *Daily Worker,* stated that management had offered an 8% increase since the beginning.

As the strike went on, the basic facts and issues began to come to the surface. As for the writer, he can only urge the readers of THE COMMONWEAL, as he did in the first installment of this story, "to pray that peace and justice will soon reign again over the tombstones and the green grass of Calvary." This time he would urge them to pray harder.

JOHN C. CORT.

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Symbols of Christ

The Tree of Life

"And the Lord brought forth of the ground all manner of trees, fair to behold and pleasant to eat of: the tree of life also in the midst of paradise." (*Genesis* 2, 9).

"The Wisdom of God is a true tree of life to all that lay hold upon her." (*Proverbs* 3, 18).

"In the midst of the street, and on both sides of the river, was the tree of life, bearing twelve fruits, yielding its fruits every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." (*Apocalypse* 22, 2).

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THE TREE has always played an important part in folklore and myth. It symbolizes the eternal cycle of life and death and resurrection; it is a figure as well as a pledge of community life. In spring the tree puts forth its tender buds and flowers; through the long summer its leafy branches cover both men and beasts with shade and comfort; and in fall, when its work is done and its lifegiving fruits have been plucked from its withering limbs, its sap returns to the earth for the winter to await the resurrection of spring. Families, tribes, empires are likened to trees. The cosmic tree which stands on top of the mountain of God and upholds the dome of heaven is a symbol of world order.

All this symbolism of the tree has found its fulfillment in Christ. He is foreshadowed in the tree of life which was planted in the midst of paradise, for "the Wisdom of God is a true tree of life to all that lay hold upon her" (*Proverbs* 3, 18). Christ is "the tender twig that is planted on the high mountains of Israel, that shoots forth into branches and becomes a great cedar and all the birds dwell under it" (*Ezechiel,* 17, 22), whilst the "high tree," symbol of of the kingdom of this world, shall be cut down (*Ezechiel* 31, 12, *Daniel* 4, 12). Christ, who dies on the cross and rises again is indicated in the rod of Aaron (*Numbers* 17, 8) and in the dry tree which God causes to flourish (*Ezechiel* 17, 24). The risen Christ is the true vine of which we are the branches (*John* 15, 1). He is the tree that grows on the river of the heavenly city, and yields its fruits in all eternity.

DAMASUS WINZEN.

The Screen

Films from Abroad

IT IS INTERESTING, but not surprising, that two of the most vital of the imports go back to the war period and are concerned mainly with life in concentration camps. Both of these films stress the brutality of the nazis and their inhuman attitude toward life which seems to have lost, for them at least, value and meaning. *"The Last Stop,"* which was produced by Wanda Jakubowska at Auschwitz where she was a prisoner, concentrates on the women prisoners and their anti-nazi resistance which flourished, with outside help, even under the watchful eyes of the captors. This film tends to glorify the communist resistance, but it makes clear that any resistance that would put an end to all this cruelty, suffering and death deserves praise. The dialogue, which is spoken in French, German, Polish and Russian, is acpanied by English subtitles. Be sure that you feel strong when you see this film; its realistic visualization of camp life is not for the faint-hearted.

The same can be said of *"The Wandering Jew,"* an Italian picture with English subtitles, which uses a camp for men as its hell hole of nazi degeneration. Its story, which gets pretentiously involved in historic scenes showing the persecution of the Jews through the ages, concentrates finally on a modern Jew who thinks he can cut himself off from his people and build happiness for himself on his wealth. He gets a change of heart and is eventually remade through suffering and love. The story is a little naive, but Goffredo Alessandrini has directed the last part of the film, especially the concentration-camp scenes, very well. Since evil provides more vivid material than good in movies, one comes away from these films impressed by the sufferings of the nazi's victims but appalled at the depths to which their captors sank.

As an antidote to these pictures of man's inhumanity comes a French film, *"Man to Men"* which is about Henri Dunant who started the international Red Cross. Like the lives of most benefactors to mankind, Dunant's path was no thing of ease; and his story makes interesting film material. Under the direction of Christian-Jaque, who collaborated with Charles Spaak on the script, this material has been fashioned into a broad panorama that starts in Algeria and sweeps to Italy, France and Switzerland. It covers several wars, a great deal of fighting and a lot of arguing (which probably accompanies every humanitarian movement) and it includes many fine small

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scenes that carry the themes of Dunant's rather unhappy private life. Jean-Louis Barrault gives an excellent portrayal in the lead rôle, and he is well supported by a large cast, especially Bernard Blier as his good friend and assistant, and Helene Perdriere as the woman he loved but never won. Winning the Nobel Prize must have been a great source of satisfaction to this man whose life was so full of ups and downs, and who knew that he had done a lot of good but suspected that nobody else knew it. "Man to Men" is particularly successful in capturing a feel of historical period and place as well as bringing to life a great visionary.

Another new French import is *"Devil in the Flesh,"* which tells a moving story of a love affair between a young boy and a married woman who is several years his senior. Under the direction of Claude Autant Lara this theme is handled with touching insight, but, except for the exceedingly fine performances of Gerard Philipe and Micheline Presle in the leads, the lengthy picture adds up to little more than a dragged out study of two people caught in an illicit love. The script, which stems from the novel by Raymond Radiguet, is similar to those continental love stores of the 1920s. It ends as did so many of those stories with the death of one of the lovers. And one has a feeling that he has been prying where he shouldn't.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

OF NOTE

The Rôle of the State

A FEBRUARY issue of the *Tablet* (128 Sloane St., London, S.W.1, England), in opposing editorially the basic theory behind the Labor Government, said in part:

> The whole tragedy of the British working class in the twentieth century is that it has confused progress and reform with the extension of State control. State control is only one way of doing things, a way full of drawbacks and dangers and disastrous long-term effects. The great increase of wealth brought about by free enterprise—a novelty in human history, which is in general the history of needless poverty mainly due to the heavy and grasping hands of rulers—had generated in Britain a great and growing national income, which made possible all sorts of social provision. It was eminently right and proper to use the wealth created for these purposes, and even to use the official machinery of the public revenue to collect some portion of it for social ends, so that the State could compensate and offset the injustices and misfortunes incidental to the working of a general process whose large results have transformed so much for the better the standards of life. But it was never in the least necessary to apply this surplus in the way it is being applied, to build up a structure of interlocking all-pervasive Government departments, arrogating more and more power to themselves.
>
> That has been the great and tragic blunder of the philanthropists and progressives — that they have never understood what Catholic sociology calls "subsidiary function," the principle of safeguarding the rôles of lesser organizations within the State; that they have not really cared about or understood the rights of the family or of any other association, and that they have limited their thinking to two terms—the individual and the whole community organized as the State. All the good results desired in education, health or social security, could have been very much better secured if the State had limited itself to giving contributions to the free agencies which had so long grown up and were so flourishing in all these fields. . . .

On the Reunion of Christendom

THE JANUARY-MARCH issue of *Unitas* (distributed in this country by the Graymoor Press, Peekskill, N. Y.) features an address by Rev. Charles Boyer, S.J., of Rome, which includes the following:

> Can one be attached to the Catholic Church as the only true Church of Christ and at the some time entertain the thought that the return of the dissidents will bring to the Church not only a numerical increase but also a spiritual embellishment in the understanding of dogma and the exercise of the virtues? If the answer is in the affirmative, one agrees with the brethren on the other bank, one throws towards them a bridge by which one can pass in either direction. Reunion is then no longer the unilateral acceptance of Catholic truth, but an exchange of richness, a reciprocal communication that contributes to the realization of the same plenitude. For example, the Lutheran would bring to the Catholic a more profound sense of the gratuitousness of grace, the Calvinist would impress him with a more intimate use of the Bible, the Anglican a more severe austerity in the divine service, and the Orthodox a more vivid feeling of the mystical life of the Church. The problem is delicate; for one runs the risk of diminishing the Church while attributing a deficiency to her which is only the particular condition of such or such of her members. I should not wish to concede that on any point of faith the Lutherans or the Anglicans have a more perfect doctrine than our Catholic Church has, with whom her spouse dwells until the end of time. But it is certain that one finds some Catholics less penetrated than they should be by the truth of the gratuitousness of grace or of the holiness of the Bible or of the mystic beauties of the Church. The dissidents could no doubt discover in the Church some admirable models on all the points on which they themselves are deficient. . . .

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Books

The World's Best Hope. Francis Biddle. The University of Chicago Press. $3.50.

There Is Freedom for the Brave. Paul McGuire. Morrow. $4.00.

THERE are books which are neither brilliantly written nor full of original ideas but which, nevertheless, are very helpful. Such a book has now been presented by Francis Biddle, who was Attorney General in the wartime cabinet of F.D.R. The ten chapters, based on Walgreen Foundation lectures delivered at the University of Chicago, bring together much material about the problems facing the United States in our time. The United States has become the mightiest world power, but this fact is often overlooked or not taken seriously enough by many Americans. Biddle shows how the USA replaces more and more the declining English influence. He discusses America's basic social and political beliefs and warns against their doctrinaire, unrealistic application.

He is a critic of the dogmatic acceptance of a free enterprise ideology which, by the way, does not in practice prevent demands for subsidies. He discusses the difference between moderate socialism accepting political democracy and Soviet communism which is totalitarian. He tries to differentiate between the specific American kind of democracy and universal human rights. He is worried about the parochial approach prevailing in American internal politics, though he is well aware that national policies and attitudes successfully emerged in times of crisis. He suggests some institutional changes in order to bring legislative and executive work more closely together, though he rejects the simple transfer to the United States of the English parliamentary system.

Biddle's book is not primarily the book of a scholar; even less can it be regarded a bold reform program. It is written by a man with much common sense, who is eager to realize moderate political and social changes in conformity with a progressive line of thought. Biddle is strongly anti-communistic, but he is anxious to overcome communism by an improvement of the life of the masses. There is no awareness of the spiritual crisis of our time. That is a limitation of these pages which contain much enlightening factual information.

★

In distinction from Francis Biddle, Paul McGuire is well aware of the religious and historical background of the present world situation. It is the great merit of his book to see not only the present, but also the past, and, though emphasizing the impossibility of foreseeing historical events, he calls attention to eternal truths shaping men and human history. Paul McGuire is against all beliefs and doctrines making man a victim of mechanical trends and necessary developments. Man creates history, but he is not an absolute creator; he is subordinated to the order established by God. If he does not realize that, he deprives himself of freedom and becomes a slave of blind forces.

Paul McGuire's criticism is directed against the Monstrous State which has been realized in Marxist totalitarianism as well as in Nazi and Fascist systems. The Monstrous State resulted from the loss of belief in God and from the rejection of principles which are not determined exclusively by men and society. This criticism, developed from the positive background of Christianity, is most brilliantly presented. Though the fire is directed against socialism, the laissez-faire capitalists and their irresponsibility are not forgotten. The British Labor Government is accused of many sins—in a moderate language: Paul McGuire is not a fanatic—but the sins of Mr. Hoover's administration are mentioned too.

Besides a philosophical-historical part — here Paul McGuire displays his extraordinary gifts as popularizer— there are chapters devoted to the problems of our time. The Australian author is a great admirer of the British Commonwealth, which avoids centralization, but, as he believes, maintains unity. The Commonwealth appears to him as a model for the world. But he realizes that today the fate of the world depends upon the United States with its wealth and superior military power. There is a thoughtful, though not too original, analysis of the Soviet Union and of world communism.

Paul McGuire's book will find many readers who will be stimulated by its wealth of ideas and pleased by its easy style. (Only rarely a tendency is to be observed to indulge in rhetorical emotionalism.) The author is himself aware that many of his proposals have very little chance of realization. He wants on the one hand to avoid socialization, and on the other, to make economic life subordinate to demands of the community. He is a bitter enemy of all tariff restrictions and an enthusiastic advocate of free trade. But he presents the case for the "Open Society" in a very convincing way also for those who would be inclined to avoid identifying Christianity with Western civilization. But despite all question marks which the attentive reader will put on the margins of its pages, the book of Paul McGuire must be recommended as one of the most thoughtful attempts to investigate the deeper meaning of the political-social crisis of our time.

WALDEMAR GURIAN.

Point Of No Return. John P. Marquand. Little, Brown. $3.50.

THIS NOVEL of more than 550 pages is a thorough piece of work. It is the story of a New Englander of the lower strata of the upper class who succeeds in becoming the vice-president of a New York bank. There is a mild satirical vein in Mr. Marquand's new novel, but the irony is much more restrained than in his famous *The Late George Apley,* and the description of the milieu and the psychological implications are done with even greater care and subtlety. No sociological research worker could have laid out the background and the motivation more assiduously than does Mr. Marquand. Nevertheless, his book makes neither clumsy nor dry reading; a solid craftsmanship of writing gives as much tension as possible to this mildly interesting, slow-moving story. Many secondary figures, exhibiting the essential characteristics of collective groups, enliven the story, some of them interesting, none unforgettable.

The novel unfolds a rich segment of American life from the early twenties until our day, especially the atmosphere of a quaint Massachusetts town and the life of the happy few in the more distinguished residential areas around New York. We learn very little about the lower strata of society, but we get detailed information on the

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various ranks of the upper class and the traditions, customs and taboos on every step of the social ladder. The reader of *Point Of No Return* will be impressed by the power of collective behavior, the bondage of which seems to keep in chains even the more original characters. Success, as the author sees it, is a blending of a modest amount of initiative with keen adaptation to the accepted standards of the next higher rank of social hierarchy. The hero's way to vice-presidentship is paid for by suppressing most of his individuality and kowtowing before the approved standards of behavior.

Should Mr. Marquand's novel present a true picture of life, it might not be as great a pleasure to climb up to the distinction of a bank vice-president as most Americans believe. They imagine that a higher rank in society will grant a greater radius of individual freedom. To the reader of this novel this wishful thinking is revealed as a clumsy illusion.

A materialistic atmosphere pervades the whole book. Essentially religious problems are never touched; the church seems to be nothing more than a social club. Not a single figure of the story is disquieted by metaphysical problems; all matters involved in the novel are those of social standard and prestige. There is youthful love, too, but it seems to be nothing more than a biological urge, combined with some naive illusions. There are not any incommensurable experiences in this novel; everything is sociologically determined: events are exchangeable as well as persons.

The aftertaste that remains is that of melancholic depression, at least to this reader. If life would be nothing but a fight for social success, it would not be worth living. As no other ideas and ideals exist among the persons of this novel than the desire for money and social position, the loss of them is an irreparable disaster and it is characteristic that the hero's father who lost his fortune during the crash of 1929 reacts with suicide. I am sure this desolate picture of American life of the recent past is very one-sided, but taken with this reservation, Mr. Marquand's presentation gives a dense and well documented picture of a completely materialistic world.

The author is a great craftsman, not a poet. A poet could not have told this story without bringing forth the insight that most persons of this novel are really living in hell, without any spiritual desire banging against the walls of their self-sufficient world. We are not even sure whether the author is himself fully aware of the utter gloom of his world; he neither complains nor bewails. He just states the facts with the objectivity of a scientist and with apparently only the ambition of giving a most exact reproduction of life as he sees it. This book ends a chapter in literary history: it is the realization of Zola's program for the social novel, manufactured to its last consequences with the most expert and minute skill.

MAX FISCHER.

The Tiger of France. By Wythe Williams, Duell, Sloan & Pearce. $4.50.

THIS IS MORE than a generous tribute to Georges Eugene Benjamin Clemenceau, better known as The Tiger, by one who knew him since 1913 and promptly earned his friendship, which ended only with the death of the great leader of France in 1929. It is, in fact, also an important chapter in the history of France. Wythe Williams was the representative of an important New

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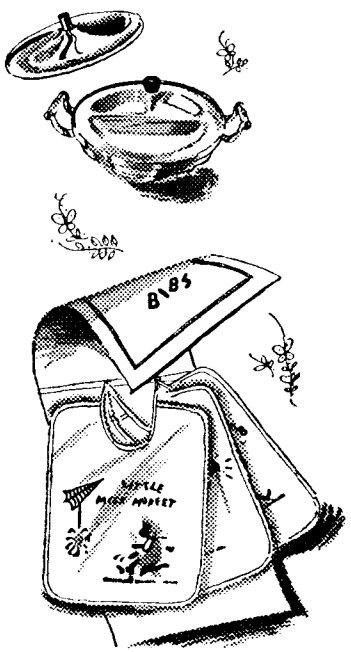

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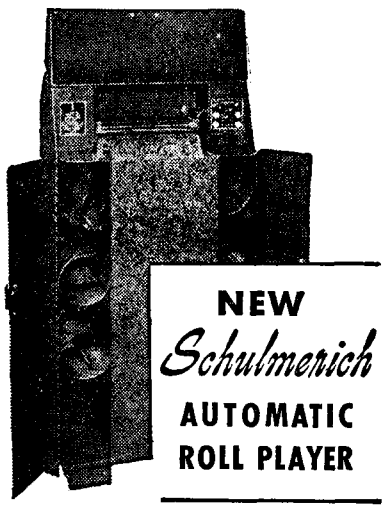

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York newspaper; and Clemenceau always felt kindly towards journalists, for he had been one himself and considered journalism a better and more exciting job than that of holding political office; indeed, he always reverted to journalism in the interludes when he was not holding office or holding the kind of office that permitted him to act in the rôle of newspaper commentator. In this rôle, he was a terror to corrupt or incompetent ministries, and many a ministry fell as a result of his savage and well-directed attacks. Sometimes, as in the case of Poincairé, he was offered a cabinet job; but Clemenceau was too astute, too wily, to accept; for he knew that to accept would be to clip his wings; would be to render him unfit to accomplish what he deemed his duty to the France he loved so well, the France he wished strong and incorruptible, the France whom, above all, he desired to be free from the menace of her traditional enemy, Germany.

Mr. Williams records the numerous conversations he held with The Tiger, and out of these conversations, plus the author's running commentary, there emerges the portrait of a very remarkable man, whom Mr. Williams does not hesitate to call France's greatest man since Napoleon. In his own sphere, that of politics, Clemenceau appears to have been distinguished with the gift of prophecy. In this he greatly resembles Winston Churchill, whom he resembled in other ways. Like Churchill, in one of the greatest crises of history, he assumed quite naturally the position of the savior of his country. After his famous "I wage war" speech, made in the Chamber of Deputies, he had France with him, and no one, no matter how much he may have hated Clemenceau, dared oppose him. He was nobody in the eighties, yet Bismarck himself took note of him, and predicted that "some day he may even get the best of us—even us. He is a person to keep your eye on."

As for Clemenceau's prophetic acumen, it should be observed that as early as 1908 he foretold that on the outbreak of war between Germany and England, the German armies would invade France through Belgium. When he heard of the Serajevo assassination, he had not the least doubt of war. While in this country in 1922, he gave the League of Nations twenty years, "probably less," before it would perish; and he prophesied in no uncertain terms the Second World War. He was firmly convinced that "a question is never settled until it is settled right," and from the first he had always held that "men who fight for conquest can be beaten. Men who fight for ideals—never." Hence, in that famous "I wage war" speech, he spoke of the possibility of France having to retreat to the Pyrenees, in which event, "I shall continue to wage war, and I wage war until the last quarter-hour, because the last quarter-hour will be ours." The reader, perhaps, will share with Mr. Williams the regret that there was no Clemenceau to lead France in 1940, and he will share the speculation as to the probability of a different result.

As for the rest, this book is a record of what is known of Clemenceau's private life, of his paternity, his education, his struggles, his experiences in America, as journalist, doctor, and riding instructor in a young ladies' school in Connecticut. He married an American woman, but it was a maladjusted marriage. He liked America, its spirit, and its ways; he went so far as to learn its slang, which he employed with easy proficiency. He apparently thought the developing American language more lively than con-

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ventional English, though when the occasion arose he spoke English perfectly. He disliked Yes-men, and got along better with those who stood up to him. And he expressed a wish to be buried standing, facing Germany.

JOHN COURNOS.

Scott-King's Modern Europe. Evelyn Waugh. Little Brown. $2.00.

BY 1946 Scott-King had been classical master at Granchester for twenty-one years. He was himself an old Granchesterian and had returned straight from the University after failing for a fellowship. There he had remained, growing slightly bald and slightly corpulent, known to generations of boys first as "Scottie," then of late years, while barely middle-aged, as "old Scottie"—a school institution, whose precise and slightly nasal lamentations of modern decadence were widely paradied. Thus mildly, does Evelyn Waugh begin to spread ruin over yet another horror of organization and elaboration and racket that affronts him in the modern scene. This time he reports with wit and savagery not on the burial of loved ones, but the exhumation by old Scottie of Bellorius, a forgotten classic poet of Neutralia, and the rest is phantasmagoric consequence.

The book is not really a novel, nor of novel length, but a short story that takes apart the apparatus of cultural relations set-ups that operate as propaganda traps, and commercial advertising sicklied o'er with the sweets of non-commercial arts, as practiced by almost all governments today as part of their political machinery. The free trips and fine printing, Ambassadors and Officials in the act, the passport snarls, underground rabbit warrens, the inversion of reasons for banquets, victuals for the hungry, ghost-written speeches—all figure. Not a detail of all this negation of solitary pilgrimages and the Grand Tours of Upper Classes is omitted. PH.D.s in psychological warfare; energetic guys and guyesses in the tourism big business, Voices of this country and that, folks on the pay-rolls of Mass Communication bureaus, all who ever rode on a gravy train, or who have been sped in luxury as part of a Congressional Investigating Committee will wince or guffaw, recognize themselves or others, and probably be sure that the story is just about Neutralia and other states behind the Iron Curtain. But we are all tarred with the same brush, and have been stooges to the same game of dramatizing state feelings where no private knowledge or emotion, faith or imagination, burgeons.

There is no humor in the book, and little pity for the predicament of Modern Europe; there is no sly admission that much of what goes on is aping of the British Council, too, and all of it, just a little a procession of unhappy camels crossing the desert of our times on lean or fatted humps. But wit there is and, as always, delightful writing; and the Waugh disgust for a technological melee, and the mince-meat that has been made of the past. We cannot propagate faith in ourselves; we can advertise anything with our verbiage; we can syndicate brawls round the world; and so what?

Old Scottie, home via a Jewish Illicit Immigrants' Camp in Palestine, rescued by an Old School tie and recognized as he sat naked in his tent while a man in khaki drill tapped his knee with a ruler, was the same old Scottie to Granchester outside. Indeed he was man

IT'S LENT—BUT IT'S SPRING—and with books bursting into blossom all over Sheed & Ward (on time, too) we are having a desperate time trying to feel properly penitential.

In **IMMORTAL DIAMOND: Studies in Gerard Manley Hopkins,** edited by **Norman Weyand, S.J.,** eleven Jesuits, no less, write on every aspect of Hopkins as man, priest and poet. This, we say proudly, is an indispensable book for any student of modern poetry, not to mention any student of Hopkins. The quantity of advance orders received so far indicates that there are lots more of these than we had guessed, which is nice. *Ready March 24th. $5.00.*

PORTUGUESE PILGRIMAGE by **C. C. Martindale, S.J.** (that makes thirteen Jesuits in this ad so far), is the account of two months he recently spent in Portugal during which, as usual, he managed to see and understand more than most of us would have in a year. His book puts a background behind the Fatima shrine—the countryside, the towns and people, a glimpse of their history. Fatima itself he calls "the heart of modern Portugal", but he is not sure that Our Lady's message has always been best understood by those most enthusiastic about it. *Ready. $2.75.*

We told you before that our guess was that **the** book for Lenten reading this year would be **Caryll Houselander's THE PASSION OF THE INFANT CHRIST** ($1.75) and if early sales are any indication we were quite right. Just the same, if you want a book that will last you the whole of the rest of Lent, Vol. I of **Msgr. Knox's** translation of **THE OLD TESTAMENT** ($7.00) would suit you excellently—740 pages, mostly highly readable, though we couldn't help wondering if the Author would have really minded if we had cut Leviticus a bit . . .

FRANCE PAGAN? by **Maisie Ward** ($3.00) is out, but there hasn't been time for reviews yet on this or on **Christopher Dawson's RELIGION AND CULTURE** ($3.50). **Robert Sencourt's ST. PAUL** ($5.00) is getting some beauties: "Mr. Sencourt makes the man, his times and the scenes of his activity come to life with singular vigor and appeal"—Rev. A. W. Dowd, S.J., in *America* (that's fourteen Jesuits); "We not only have a clear picture of the Apostle of the Gentiles, but a remarkable insight into the world of his times."—A. M. Fitzpatrick, S.T.D., in *The Catholic Universe Bulletin.*

If you would like a Spring list and all that sort of thing, let us know.

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Next Week

OUR LENTEN LITURGY, by H. A. Reinhold. ". . . This is by no means all there is to say about Lent. The motif of penance is not even the first. A preceding period knew Lent primarily as the catechumenate, preparing for the great night of baptism, the night of Christ's resurrection. It is hard for us to realize how positively charged the atmosphere of Lent was in those days. As the heirs of a long process of pruning, reducing, cutting and streamlining, we can hardly realize what adult baptism meant in that time—coming as the climax of a conscious conversion after the austerities of the immediate preparation through a Lent of several weeks. . . ."

THE REAL ITALIAN COMMUNISTS, by Jean C. de Menasce, brings to a climax and conclusion his discussion in this issue, which is devoted to the rank and file; next week Father Menasce probes into the inner workings of the minds of the Italian communist leaders. He deals with their utter dedication to the Cause, their obliteration of self, their consistent lack of interest in the personalities of others. . . .

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become iron, saying, "It would be very wicked to do anything to fit a boy for the modern world."

"It's a short-sighted view, Scott-King," said the headmaster.

"There, headmaster, with all respect, I differ from you profoundly. I think it the most long-sighted view it is possible to take."

Meanwhile, Mr. Waugh lectures to Americans. Modern Europe puts up barbed wire enclosures, and people creep under and over them; UNESCO is there to cut a slice from, as from a giant, cultural wedding cake. Mr. Waugh has had some very sour and delectable fun.

ERNESTINE EVANS.

Double Muscadine. Frances Gaither. Macmillan. $3.50.

THIS Book-of-the-Month Club selection for the month of March has the smooth, professional polish of expert ladies-magazine fiction. It waves at the emotions without ever touching them, and it salutes, rather than greets, the inquiring intelligence. All the stock characters are in this story; we've met every one of them before, but this time they carry new aliases; which makes it all the more unusual that in the midst of these carefully coached carryings-on there is material for some very relevant reflection.

In modelling her tale of a slave-country killing "in considerable part on an actual case in the records of the Supreme Court of Mississippi in the 1850's," Frances Gaither introduces a trial judge who speaks some terrible words: "What act in a slave will amount to insolence it is manifestly impossible to define. It may consist of a look, the pointing of a finger, a refusal or neglect to step out of the way when a white person is seen to approach. But each of such acts violates the rules of propriety and if tolerated would destroy that subordination upon which our social system rests."

The dust of oblivion's ninety-nine year lease cannot hide the terror in the words unearthed by Mrs. Gaither. Nor can the subtler dust of indifference obscure their present-day relevance. Look and pointed finger, refusal and oversight, make up a lonely, dangerous quartet. The music of this "quartet"—that in today's world may mean death or joblessness—rarely pleases the players. And one needn't cross oceans to hear its sad, savage sound.

MURRAY HICKEY LEY.

Way Of A Fighter. Claire Lee Chennault. Putnam. $4.50.

THE READER who can battle his way through 350 pages of the first person singular may conceivably find something of interest in this book. That, however, is very probably something few people would care to guarantee.

For this is the story of General Chennault, as written by General Chennault, with due emphasis upon the abilities and accomplishments of General Chennault. The remaining characters of the story are of two types: the mental giants who agree with Chennault, and the mental midgets who disagree. In worrying the story through 17 years of Army life, and the following years with the AVG and Fourteenth Air Force in China, the reader will find that the latter greatly outnumber the former.

Without doubt Chennault was in some respects an

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extremely able man in the position he held. And equally certainly he has much of value and interest to tell about his experiences. But these facts only make this particular presentation all the more unfortunate. A little less preoccupation with himself might have made Chennault better qualified to tell the story. As it is, only one or two notes in passing show that he is not completely ignorant of the true causes of China's present plight.

JAMES O. FREDERICK.

Medieval Lincoln. J. W. F. Hill. Macmillan. $9.50.

ONE of the most significant developments in English medieval studies in this century has been the growth of scholarly interest in local history. Under the leadership of the Manchester School historians, the antiquarian, with his narrow concern for who lived where and when, has been replaced by the trained historian, interested in tracing the manner in which larger historical trends worked themselves out on the local level. J. W. F. Hill's study of *Medieval Lincoln,* one of the greatest of English cities in the Middle Ages, is a first-rate example of the latter type of work at its best.

Here, with abundant detail, are described many of the essential features of medieval English life as they occurred in this great center of economic and religious life: the coming of the Normans and the emergence of an Anglo-Norman culture; the development of town government and the winning of civic liberties; the growth of church organization and the spread of parish churches and monasteries; the rôle of the foreign traders and of the Jews in the community; the Black Death and the social unrest of the Fourteenth Century. The general reader may find himself bogged down in the wealth of detail, but the medievalist will find this book a genuine delight.

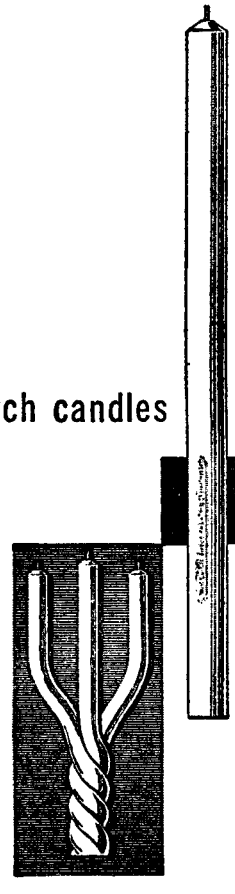
JAMES E. NEWMAN.

Out of Exile. Soetan Sjahrir. John Day. $3.00.

THE MUSINGS in this diary of an Indonesian leader from a Dutch prison camp in the East Indies a dozen years ago touch upon many things—philosophy, religion, the culture of the East and the West, personal psychology and so forth. A convincing, recurring theme is the corrupting influence of the colonial system on both European and native, planter and coolie, exploiter and exploited. Things were relatively quiet in the Indies then, but the author in his temperate fashion gives some meaningful glimpses into Dutch colonial policy and reveals such facts as the popularity of Japan even in the 1930's; it was the favorite foreign nation, a cherished vacationland for the Indonesians who could afford the trip.

Mr. Sjahrir, back in 1937, was highly critical of Dutch policy: "The colonial government will not be able to cure the disease [of social unrest] as long as colonial leadership remains convinced that the art of governing these lands involves the suppression of these millions . . . on keeping the people in the same intellectual and material circumstances that they have already been in for countless years. . . ."

E. S. S.



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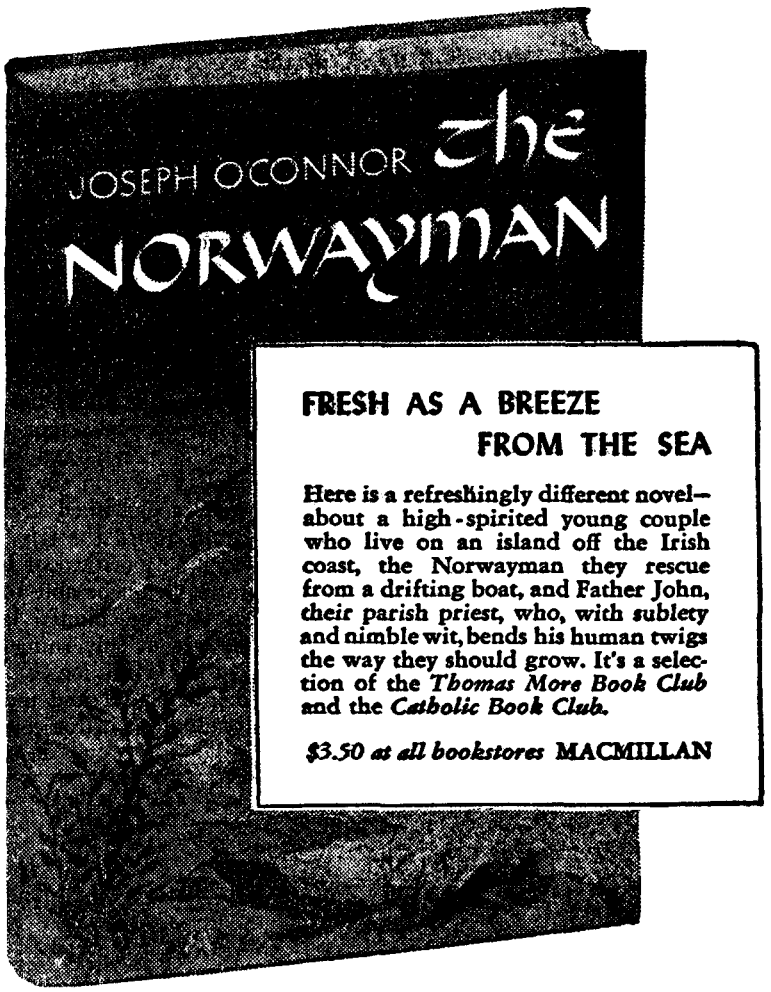
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Rev. Jean C. de MENASCE of Rome has recently organized six social workers' schools in as many principal cities of Italy. He is now in New York delivering a series of Lenten sermons.

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James E. NEWMAN has recently been an instructor in the History Department at the University of Minnesota.

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